

REMARKS

The present application was filed on December 20, 1999, with claims 1-269. Claims 1, 87 and 176 are the independent claims.

Claims 1-269 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,327,363 (hereinafter “Henderson”).

Applicant respectfully submits with regard to the §102(e) rejection that Henderson fails to meet each and every limitation of claims 1-269 as alleged by the Examiner.

The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP), Eight Edition, August 2001, §2131, specifies that a given claim is anticipated “only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference,” citing Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Moreover, MPEP §2131 indicates that the cited reference must show the “identical invention . . . in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim,” citing Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co., 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

The present invention as set forth in independent claim 1 as previously presented is directed to a method for linking at least one client with at least one expert. The method includes, among other steps, the steps of generating at least one concept based on at least one client inquiry to at least one datasource, comparing the at least one generated concept to at least one expert datasource, selecting at least one expert from the expert datasource based on the comparison of the generated concept to the expert datasource, and linking the expert to the client.

The Henderson reference, in contrast to the invention as set forth in claim 1, describes an arrangement in which a customer that wants to receive service on a given purchased product calls in and simply enters a personal identification number that is provided to the customer at the time of purchase. Based on the entered number, the call is routed to “an appropriate care center.” See the abstract. Thus, there is no generation of a concept from a client inquiry, nor any comparison of the generated concept to an expert datasource in order to select an expert, as required by the claim. Instead, Henderson teaches routing based on predetermined customer identification numbers, which not only fails to meet the limitations in question, but actively teaches away from them. The

Henderson approach appears to require that the system know in advance which service agents are best suited for which customers, and hence fails to provide the advantages associated with the present invention as set forth in claim 1.

Since claim 1 includes one or more limitations which are not met by Henderson, claim 1 is not anticipated by Henderson. Claims 2-269 as previously presented are similarly believed allowable over Henderson.

Accordingly, the §102(e) rejection is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

Notwithstanding the traversal, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 87 and 176 to clarify the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

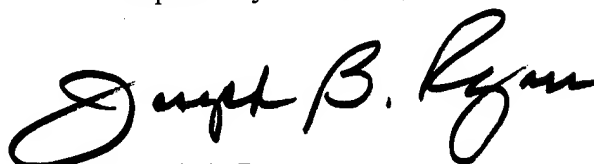
Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the at least one client inquiry comprises at least one client inquiry entered in conjunction with a computerized search conducted by the client, and that the at least one client inquiry is monitored by a first program. Further, the claim as amended specifies that the first program, responsive to entry of a command by the client, supplies information regarding the monitored at least one client inquiry to a second program and initiates performance of at least one of the generating, comparing, selecting and linking steps by the second program based on the monitored at least one client inquiry.

Claims 87 and 176 have each been amended to specify that the at least one client inquiry is entered in conjunction with a computerized search conducted by the client, and is monitored by an additional program separate from the resource matching program. These claims as amended further recite that the additional program, responsive to entry of a command by the client, supplies information regarding the monitored at least one client inquiry to the resource matching program.

Support for the amendments can be found in FIG. 1 of the drawings and the associated text at, for example, page 7, line 8, to page 8, line 5, of the specification.

In view of the above, Applicant believes that claims 1-269 as amended are in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph B. Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Date: June 22, 2006

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